

Message Text

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40

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 DRC-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 SNM-02 AID-20 DEAE-00 JUSE-00 /112 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2833

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1223

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJ: FORMER PRIME MINISTER ERIM'S COMMENTS
ON OPIUM ISSUE

1. WITH THE HEAVY ATTENTION THE TURKISH PRESS HAS BEEN DEVOTING TO THE OPIUM ISSUE, IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT A HURRIYET REPORTER INTERVIEWED FORMER PRIME MINISTER ERIM ON HIS ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT THE OPIUM CULTIVATION BAN. THE INITIAL INSTALLMENT OF THIS INTERVIEW WAS PUBLISHED ON FEBRUARY 17.

2. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PART OF ERIM'S INTERVIEW INVOLVED HIS RECOLLECTING HIS STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 24, 1972:
"WHEN THE GOVERNMENT IMPOSED A BAN ON OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION WITH ITS DECREE OF JUNE 30, 1971, IT DID NOT UNDERTAKE ANY COMMITMENT-BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL-WITH A FOREIGN COUNTRY. IT IMPOSED THE BAN THROUGH A UNILATERAL DECISION. IF OUR ECONOMY, OUR FARMERS, OR OUR COUNTRY FAIL TO FILL ANY VACUUM WHICH EMERGES, THERE IS NO COMMITMENT THAT WOULD PREVENT US FROM RESUMING CULTIVATION."

3. COMMENT: ERIM'S 1972 STATEMENT, REPEATED AGAIN IN
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THIS INTERVIEW, REFLECTS THE THEOLOGY THAT ERIM HIMSELF HELPED DEVELOP, WITH OUR COOPERATION, TO PROTECT HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT AGAINST CHARGES THAT HE HAD BOWED TO AMERICAN PRESSURE. WHILE NO ONE, THEN OR SINCE, HAS TAKEN SERIOUSLY THESE ASSERTIONS THAT TURKEY MADE ITS DECISION ON ITS OWN, AND WITHOUT PRESSURE, IT NEVERTHELESS REMAINS A FACTOR THAT WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN OUR PRESENT DEALINGS WITH THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT ON THE OPIUM SITUATION.

4. THUS, I BELIEVE IT IS NOT ONLY PROPER BUT NECESSARY THAT I REFER IN MY DISCUSSIONS WITH KEY TURKISH OFFICIALS TO THE FACT REPEAT FACT THAT THERE WAS A DEAL BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. FOR THE TIME BEING, HOWEVER, THIS ARGUMENT SHOULD REMAIN PRIVATE.
MACOMBER

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